

Perceptions of Sexual Violence



Views of Sexual Assault on College Campuses

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Social Relevance

- role of peers in prevention
- measuring programs' success
- educational techniques & institutional characteristics





Research Questions

What perceptions do undergraduate students have of sexual violence and its victims?

Do institutional characteristics impact students' reactions to or attitudes towards sexual violence? Or are factors such as gender more influential?



Thesis

Both an individual's willingness to intervene and his/her understanding of the role of alcohol are influenced by the institution that he or she attends. However, gender identity had the most significant impact on an individual's belief in rape myths.



Literature Review

Barriers

Sable 2006; Jaschik 2012; Levanon 2012

Rape Culture

Wilcox 2006; Sable 2006; Burnett 2009





Literature Review

Alcohol

Krebs 2009; Luke 2009; Bell 2010; Lawyer 2010

Bystander Role

Exner 2011; Rich 2010





Dramaturgy & Victimization

- Theory by Erving Goffman
- Social interaction: actor & audience
- Three "stages"
- Setting & personal presentation → convincing the audience
- To be or not to be



Methodology

- Survey
- 3 institutions:
 - 1 public – 2 private
 - 1 same-sex – 2 coed
 - 1 large – 2 small
- 100 respondents
 - Non-representative
 - 18% male; 81% female



Findings

Rape Myths:

wearing = what a girl is wearing affects the likelihood of her being sexually assaulted

playing hard = a girl who is saying "no" but acting like "yes" is really just playing hard to get

active = a girl who is sexually active is more likely to become the victim of sexual assault than a girl who is a virgin

regretting = most cases of sexual assault are actually a result of a girl regretting a consensual sexual encounter

Intervention:

strangers = likelihood of intervening when both are strangers

male = likelihood of stopping a male friend from making unwanted advancements on female you don't know

female = likelihood of stopping male you don't know from making unwanted advancements on female friend



Findings

Table 1: Institution & Rape Myths

	WMU		SMC		HCC	
	Mean (1-10)	Agree	Mean (1-10)	Agree	Mean (1-10)	Agree
wearing	2.18	36% (18/50)	2.11	37.8% (14/37)	2.25	41.7% (5/12)
playinghard	1.92	32% (16/50)	1.71	17.1% (6/35)	2.08	41.7% (5/12)
active	1.68	24% (12/50)	1.3	5.4% (2/37)	1.6	10% (1/10)
regretting	1.43	7.8% (4/51)	1.56	13.8% (5/36)	2.27	45.5% ^{**} (5/11)
		$n_{\text{wmu}}=51$		$n_{\text{smc}}=37$		$n_{\text{hcc}}=12$



Findings

Table 2: Gender & Rape Myths

	Males		Females	
	Mean (1-10)	Agree	Mean (1-10)	Agree
wearing	2.22	38.9% (7/18)	2.14	38.3% (31/81)
playinghard	2.17	38.9% (7/18)	1.78	26.3% (21/80)
active**	1.88	31.3% (5/16)	1.42	12.7% (10/79)
regretting**	2.12	47.1% (8/17)	1.45	8.8% (7/80)
		n _m =18		n _f =81

* one respondent chose "I'd rather not say"



Findings

Table 3: Institution & Intervention

	WMU		SMC		HCC	
	Mean (1-5)	Likely	Mean (1-5)	Likely	Mean (1-5)	Likely
strangers	2.76**	41.2% (21/51)	1.92	73% (27/37)	1.67	91.7% (11/12)
male	2.25**	62.7% (32/51)	1.62	83.8% (31/37)	1.42	91.7% (11/12)
female	1.88**	76.5% (39/51)	1.14	97.3% (36/37)	1.33	91.7% (11/12)
		$n_{\text{wmu}}=51$		$n_{\text{smc}}=37$		$n_{\text{hcc}}=12$

Strength: 8% attributed to institution



Findings

Table 4: Gender & Intervention

	Males		Females	
	Mean (1-5)	Likely	Mean (1-5)	Likely
strangers	2.28	61.1% (11/18)	2.35	58% (47/81)
male	2.00	72.2% (13/18)	1.91	74.1% (60/81)
female**	2.17	61.1% (11/18)	1.41	90.1% (73/81)
		$n_m=18$		$n_f=81$

Strength: 5% attributed to gender



Findings

Table 5: Institution & Alcohol

	WMU		SMC		HCC	
	Mean	Agree	Mean	Agree	Mean	Agree
alcohol	2.65**	42% (21/50)	3.3	78.3% (29/37)	3.17	75% (9/12)
		$n_{\text{wmu}}=51$		$n_{\text{smc}}=37$		$n_{\text{hcc}}=12$

Table 6: Gender & Alcohol

	Males		Females	
	Mean	Agree	Mean	Agree
alcohol	3.28	83.3% (15/18)	2.89	60.5% (49/81)
		$n_{\text{m}}=18$		$n_{\text{f}}=81$



Discussion: Rape Myths

"wearing" ~38%

- believed most often regardless of school or gender

"playinghard" ~28%

"active" ~16%

"regretting" ~14%



Discussion: Intervention

WMU students less likely to intervene

- why?

Females more willing to help female friend

Males most likely to intervene if it involved
a male friend



Discussion: Programs

Best approaches:

- “more awareness” chosen by 74% as one of top 3 most effective ways to reduce sexual violence on campuses

Yet 49% at least somewhat unlikely to attend





Conclusions

- Continuing to overturn rape myths → reach out to male students
- Tailoring campus education to institutional needs → peer impact & large universities
- Personal trouble vs. social issue



Questions or Comments?



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